

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1-3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~decentralized computer network according to claim ~~15~~48, wherein each of at least some of the communication outlets ~~the housing~~ is configured to be secured to the wall at edges of the opening.

5. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~decentralized computer network according to claim ~~15~~48, wherein each of at least some of the communication outlets further comprises ing connectors for connecting the ~~premises interface circuitry~~bridge to the premises wiring ~~within a wall~~ in a splice fashion.

6. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~decentralized computer network according to claim ~~15~~48, wherein each of at least some of the communication outlets ~~the housing~~ is attachable to the wall in a removable manner.

7. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~decentralized computer network according to claim ~~15~~48, wherein each of at least some of the communication outlets ~~the premises interface circuitry~~ includes a plug for insertion into a modular jack and to be thereby communicably coupled to the premises equipment.

8-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~decentralized computer network according to claim ~~41~~48, wherein the ~~premises interface circuitry~~ includes an interface to data infrastructure further comprises a private branch exchange.

13. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 4148, wherein the faceplate of at least one of the plurality of communication outlets user interface circuitry includes an analog telephone interface operatively coupled to the bridge.

14. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 4148, wherein the faceplate of at least one of the plurality of communication outlets user interface circuitry includes a digital telephone interface operatively coupled to the bridge.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes data encryption.

17. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes user authentication.

18. (Currently Amended) A decentralized computer network ~~communications outlet~~ according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes a diagnostic and status reporting to the user.

19. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 18, wherein the diagnostic is operative to detect a problem with a connection between the user data device and the communication[s] outlet, and wherein the status reporting is operative to notify the user of the detected connection problem.

20. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 1548, each of the plurality of communication outlets further comprises ing power circuitry operative to receive DC power from one of the interfaces the data infrastructure or one of the data interfaces.

21. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) services.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently Amended) A decentralized computer network ~~communications outlet~~ according to claim 1548, wherein the ~~user interface circuitry, premises interface circuitry~~ plurality of data interfaces and ~~the~~ bridge are arranged on standard circuit cards disposed in the ~~housing~~ communication outlet.

24. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 23, wherein the standard circuit cards are Personal Computer Memory Card International Association (PCMCIA) circuit cards.

25-32. (Canceled)

33. (Currently Amended) A ~~communication outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 1548, wherein at least one of the plurality of communication outlets further comprises ing a processor operative to provide at least one high-level service to the user via at least one of the data user interfaces circuitry.

34. (Currently Amended) A ~~communication outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 33, wherein the at least one high-level service includes a web service.

35. (Currently Amended) A ~~communication outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 34, wherein the web service provides a link to a web service in at least one another of the plurality of communication outlets.

36. (Currently Amended) A ~~communication outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 35, wherein the web service in the at least ~~one~~ another communication outlet provides status information concerning the at least ~~one~~ another communication outlet.

37. (Currently Amended) A ~~communication outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 34, wherein the web service provides a link to a web service in the data infrastructure premises equipment.

38. (Currently Amended) A ~~communication outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 37, wherein the web service in the data infrastructure premises equipment provides status information concerning a network between the ~~premises interface circuitry~~ at least one of the plurality of communication outlets and the data infrastructure premises equipment.

39. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 1548, wherein at least one of the plurality of communication outlets housing is configured to be secured to the outlet box.

40. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 1548, wherein at least one of the plurality of communication outlets housing is configured to be secured to the electric wiring raceway.

41. (Currently Amended) A ~~communications outlet~~ decentralized computer network according to claim 1548, wherein at least one of the data user interfaces circuitry includes a link-layer data interface.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Currently amended) A communication outlet decentralized computer network according to claim 1548, wherein the faceplates of at least some of the plurality of communication outlets include[s] a plurality of connectors.

44-47. (Canceled)

48. (New) A decentralized computer network, comprising:
a data infrastructure, comprising data processing equipment; and
a plurality of communication outlets, each of the communication outlets comprising:
a faceplate;
a bridge; and
a plurality of data interfaces, each of the data interfaces being:
accessible via the faceplate for connection to a user data device; and
connected to the bridge and, via a network connection provided by the bridge, to the data infrastructure;
wherein the outlet is configured for attachment to at least one of:
an outlet box;
an opening in a wall; and
and electrical wiring raceway;
such that, after attachment, the faceplate is accessible to a user.

49. (New) The decentralized computer network of claim 48, wherein at least one of the plurality of data interfaces comprises a wireless data interface.

50. (New) The decentralized computer network of claim 48, wherein at least one of the plurality of data interfaces comprises a jack.

51. (New) The decentralized computer network of claim 48, wherein at least one of the plurality of data interfaces comprises a wireless data interface and a jack.

52. (New) The decentralized computer network of claim 48, wherein the data infrastructure further comprises premises wiring interconnecting the data processing equipment to the plurality of communication outlets.

53. (New) The decentralized computer network of claim 48, wherein the data infrastructure further comprises a wireless network connection interconnecting the data processing equipment to the plurality of communication outlets.

54. (New) A method for providing network access over existing premises wiring to a data infrastructure that includes data processing equipment, comprising:

providing a plurality of communication outlets, each of the communication outlets including a bridge;

attaching each of the plurality of communication outlets to a respective at least one of an outlet box, an opening in a wall and an electrical wiring raceway; and

electrically connecting the bridge of each of the plurality of communication outlets to the existing premises wiring.

55. (New) A method according to claim 54, further comprising:

connecting a private branch exchange to the existing premises wiring, such that the bridge in at least one of the plurality of communication outlets is operatively coupled to the private branch exchange; and

connecting a telephone to one of the plurality of communication outlets, thus establishing a connection, through the bridge of the communication outlet, between the telephone and the private branch exchange.

56. (New) A method according to claim 54, further comprising:

providing a processor within at least one of the communication outlets; and

providing, by the processor, at least one high-level service via at least one of the data interfaces of the communication outlet.

57. (New) A method according to claim 56, wherein providing the at least one high-level service comprises providing a web service.

58. (New) A method according to claim 57, wherein providing the web service comprises providing a link to a web service in at least another of the plurality of communication outlets.

59. (New) A method according to claim 58, wherein providing the web service further comprises providing status information concerning the at least another of the plurality of communication outlets.

60. (New) The method according to claim 56, wherein providing the at least one high-level service comprises providing a link to a web service in the data infrastructure.

61. (New) The method according to claim 56, wherein providing the at least one high-level service comprises providing status information concerning a network between the at least one plurality of communication outlets in the data infrastructure.

62. (New) A method according to claim 54, wherein electrically connecting the bridge comprises inserting a plug of the respective communication outlet into a modular jack that is electrically connected to the existing premises wiring.